

BOOK NOTICE

SILVERTHORNE, ELIZABETH. 1996. **Legends & Lore of Texas Wildflowers.** (ISBN 0-89096-702-4, hbk.) Texas A&M University Press, Drawer C, College Station, Texas 77843-4354, \$29.95. 264 pp, 18 b&w illustrations.

For those of us that spend countless hours splitting botanical hairs—it would be a pleasant respite to sit down in front of a warm winter fire with a comforting cup of tea and this book. Folklore enthusiasts, gardeners, and Texas history buffs can browse the forty-four chapters set aside for each Texas wildflower that the author has found the most fascinating.

Elizabeth Silverthorne admits she is not a botanist or certified naturalist but has a deep interest in wildflowers and mythology. In this book she keeps alive the 'telling of the tale' of Texas wildflowers along with their natural, political and social history.

I particularly found the wildflower mythology of interest. As with all mythology it is simple and forceful and transcends things unexplainable as in one passage in the chapter on Clover ... "according to tradition it was instrumental in persuading the Irish people to accept the Christian faith: As St. Patrick labored during the early days of his mission to explain the doctrine of the trinity to a clan of dubious natives, he had little success. Then one day a chieftain demanded, 'How can there be three in one?' and St. Patrick, noticing the shamrocks growing at his feet, plucked one leaf and held it up. Using this old lucky symbol of the sacred sun wheel, he illustrated how three persons in the Godhead can exist and yet be one. The illustration was so simple and so forceful that the entire clan followed its leaders in accepting Christianity."

Legends & Lore of Texas Wildflowers is the tenth book by this award-winning author who resides in Salado, Texas.—*Linny Heagy.*